



LEROY D. BACA, SHERIFF

County of Los Angeles
Sheriff's Department Headquarters
4700 Ramona Boulevard
Monterey Park, California 91754-2169



December 6, 2005

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

This letter is to express my support of your efforts to create a separate Department of Public Health. In this time of increased threat from bioterrorism or other threats to our homeland, it is essential to have a strong Public Health Department as a vital part of our emergency response capability. In addition, the recent SARS scare and the current fears of an influenza pandemic highlight the importance of having strong, visible and trusted public health leadership to help reduce fear, prevent panic, and reduce disruption of social systems and businesses.

Effective integration and coordination of efforts between our two organizations is crucial to protecting Los Angeles County residents. My office has worked closely with Public Health for several years, planning and executing preparedness plans and exercises, and participating in the joint training on forensic epidemiology. We have recently signed an MOU with Public Health and the FBI governing joint investigations in the event of a homeland security incident. Dr. Fielding and I have worked very closely on several health threats and I value his public health expertise and leadership.

The creation of a separate Public Health Department, as an agency whose central mission is protection of health and prevention of disease for the entire population, will continue to strengthen our homeland security.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support.

Sincerely,

LEROY D. BACA
SHERIFF

A Tradition of Service